



Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel

*Your Residential Utility
Consumer Advocate*

CONSUMER ALERT

Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel

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CONSUMER ALERT: NORTHEAST OHIO GAS WANTS TO INCREASE YOUR BILL – OCC OPPOSES



Make Your Voice Heard at the PUCO!

The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) has scheduled a public hearing where you can comment on Northeast Ohio Gas' (NEO's) proposal to increase your gas bill. The Ohio Consumers' Counsel (OCC), the state's advocate for residential utility consumers, opposes the increase and filed testimony supporting a **RATE DECREASE**.

NEO is seeking to increase residential consumer bills by more than 10%. Under NEO's proposal, consumers' monthly customer charge will increase from \$21.77 to \$35. The customer charge is fixed and must be paid even if consumers use no gas at all. High fixed charges on consumer bills make it more difficult for consumers to reduce their gas bill by conserving energy.

Additionally, over the next four years (2024-2028) NEO proposes to add new, separate charges to consumers' bills for gas infrastructure and other projects. Those new monthly charges to consumers start out small (potentially an extra \$1.83/month in 2024) but balloon to as much as a \$17/month added on to consumer bills by 2028. These additional charges, if approved, would be on top of the 10% rate increase NEO requests.

OCC is advocating for a rate decrease, not a rate increase. OCC also opposes NEO's request for special ratemaking treatment that allows NEO to separately collect monthly charges from consumers for its gas infrastructure and other projects.

Additionally, OCC filed testimony supporting, among other things, improvements to NEO's customer

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The Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel (OCC), the residential utility consumer advocate, represents the interests of 4.5 million households in proceedings before state and federal regulators and in the courts.

The state agency also educates consumers about electric, natural gas, telephone and water issues.

For more information, please visit the OCC website at www.occ.ohio.gov.



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service and shareholder funding for bill-payment assistance for consumers in need. OCC also advocated for closer scrutiny of the utility's service disconnections of its utility consumers.

Here are links to OCC's testimony:

- ▶ <https://bit.ly/neo-testimony-1>
- ▶ <https://bit.ly/neo-testimony-3>

Now is not the time for a natural gas rate hike! We encourage you to get involved and make your voice heard at the PUCO!

Three Ways to Make Your Voice Heard at the PUCO

IN-PERSON: 6 p.m. Tuesday, December 5 at the Wooster Community Center, 241 S. Bever St., Wooster, Ohio 44691

ONLINE: Click on "File a Public Comment" at <https://bit.ly/neo-rate-case-2023>

BY MAIL: Send a letter referencing Northeast Ohio Gas and PUCO Case 23-154 to:

Public Utilities Commission of Ohio
180 E. Broad St., 11th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

For tips on how to speak at local public hearings, visit <https://bit.ly/occ-make-your-voice-heard>.

Want to Know More?

Here is a link to the PUCO docket with all the filings in the case, including OCC's objections and expert testimony: <https://bit.ly/neo-rate-case-2023>

Contact

Call or e-mail your advocate, the Ohio Consumers' Counsel, at 1-877-742-5622 or occ@occ.ohio.gov.